

⑨ 日本国特許庁 (JP)

⑪ 特許出願公開

⑫ 公開特許公報 (A)

昭57—96453

⑤ Int. Cl.³
H 01 J 61/067

識別記号

庁内整理番号
6722—5C

⑬ 公開 昭和57年(1982)6月15日

発明の数 1
審査請求 未請求

(全 3 頁)

⑭ 放電灯用焼結電極

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② 出 願 昭55(1980)12月6日

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PTO 2003-4901

S.T.I.C. Translations Branch

明 細 書

1. 発明の名称

放電灯用焼結電極

2. 特許請求の範囲

(1) 導電性を有し、高温で安定な導電繊維をエミッタ物質中に分散させてなる放電灯用焼結電極。

(2) 導電繊維がタングステンボイスカ、炭化タングステンボイスカおよび炭素繊維のなかから選ばれた少なくともひとつである特許請求の範囲第1項記載の放電灯用焼結電極。

(3) エミッタ物質がアルカリ土類金属の酸化物および過酸化物の少なくとも一方である特許請求の範囲第1項または第2項記載の放電灯用焼結電極。

(4) エミッタ物質に対する導電繊維の配合比が20～50重量多である特許請求の範囲第1項から第3項までのいずれかに記載の放電灯用焼結電極。

3. 発明の詳細な説明

この発明は蛍光灯など放電灯用の焼結電極に係

するものである。

放電灯用の電極として第1図(a)、(b)に示す如き、リード線3をそなえた金属ポット1またはコイル1'の内部にエミッタ物質2を装填し、焼結したものが広く知られている。このような焼結電極は、家庭用蛍光灯ランプに用いられているような、タングステンフィラメントの表面にエミッタ物質を塗布した形の電極に比べ、多量のエミッタ物質をそなえているので寿命が長いという利点をもっているが、他方、エミッタ層が厚いため電子放出効率が悪いという欠点があった。

また、放電時におけるホットスポットは電位の低い部分に生じやすいので、初めは良導体である金属ポット1に近い部分の表面部に生ずるが、その部分からの熱電子の供給が時間とともに減衰してゆく結果、次第に中央部に移行するようになる。この場合、金属ポット1から遠ざかった分だけ電気抵抗が増加するためホットスポットの温度が高くなり、電子放出に悪影響を及ぼす。さらに、例えば酸化バリウム、酸化ストロンチウム、酸化カ

ルシウムなどの発光ランプ用エミッタ物質では、900~1,000℃以上の温度に加熱され、熱電子を放出している間は電気伝導が良好であるが、それよりも低い温度では抵抗が増加してエミッタに流れる電流が減少し、ジュール熱の発生が減少するので、ホットスポットの温度がますます低くなり、熱電子放出効率が落ちるようになる。このような問題点を改良するため、エミッタ物質に導電性の高い金属粒子を分散混入して焼結したものもあるが、電気抵抗が充分には小さくならないので満足すべき効果は得られていなかった。

この発明は以上に述べたような事情に鑑みながら、長寿命でかつ熱電子放出効率が低下しないような焼結電極を提供するものである。これについて以下に説明する。

この発明にかかる放電灯用の焼結電極は、導電性を有し、高温で安定な導電繊維をエミッタ物質中に分散させてなることを特徴としている。

この焼結電極に用いられるエミッタ物質としては、例えばバリウム、ストロンチウムまたはカル

シウムなどの発光ランプ用エミッタ物質では、900~1,000℃以上の温度に加熱され、熱電子を放出している間は電気伝導が良好であるが、それよりも低い温度では抵抗が増加してエミッタに流れる電流が減少し、ジュール熱の発生が減少するので、ホットスポットの温度がますます低くなり、熱電子放出効率が落ちるようになる。このような問題点を改良するため、エミッタ物質に導電性の高い金属粒子を分散混入して焼結したものもあるが、電気抵抗が充分には小さくならないので満足すべき効果は得られていなかった。

(実施例および比較例)

第2図に示すような、エミッタ物質中に導電繊維を分散させてなる焼結電極を製作し、その性能を調べた。使用した金属ボット1は鉄製で、内径 $D_0=5.0\text{mm}$ 、高さ $H=5.5\text{mm}$ のEIAJ規格TC-7相当品であった。この金属ボット1内に、約70mgのエミッタ物質(BaO_2)と導電繊維(タングステンホイスカ、炭化タングステンホイスカまたは炭素繊維)を種々の割合で混合したものを

シウムのようなアルカリ土類金属の酸化物もしくは過酸化物など通常知られているエミッタ物質が用いられる。

また、導電繊維としては、例えばタングステンホイスカ、炭化タングステンホイスカ、あるいは炭素繊維などが単独でまたは併せて用いられる。この場合、蒸気圧が低く、かつ、水銀などの封入物質と容易に反応しないようなものであることが望まれる。繊維の太さは、数ミクロンから数十ミクロンという極細のものが適当である。

このような導電繊維を適当な長さ(数ミリメートルから数十ミリメートルが好ましい)に切断してエミッタ物質中に混入して焼結するのであるが、この場合、導電繊維がエミッタ物質中に均一に分散するように配慮する必要がある。エミッタ物質に対する導電繊維の配合比は、特に限定されるものではないが、陰極降下電圧およびエミッタ物質の欠落の面からみて、10重量%以上が好ましく、20~50重量%が特に好ましい。

以上に説明したように、この発明にかかる放電

灯用焼結電極は、導電性を有し、高温で安定な導電繊維をエミッタ物質中に分散させてなることを特徴とするので、エミッタ物質中に良好な導電経路が形成され、したがって熱電子放出を高水準に維持することができるようになるのである。この場合、導電繊維同士が接触していなくとも、例えばエミッタ物質中に金属粒子を分散させたものに較べて電気抵抗が大巾に低下する。また、エミッタ物質中に分散した導電繊維は、エミッタ物質の欠落を防止する補強繊維としての働きをなし、電極の長寿命化に寄与するのである。

(以下 余 白)

第 1 表

| No. | エミッタ物質 | 導電繊維* | 導電繊維配合比 (対エミッタ物質)(重量%) | 臨極降下電圧 (V) | エミッタ欠落 ^{***} |
|------|------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| 実施例1 | BaO ₂ | タングステンボイスカ | 10 | 17~18 | ○ |
| " 2 | " | " | 20 | 15~17 | ○ |
| " 3 | " | " | 50 | 15~17 | ◎ |
| " 4 | " | " | 75 | 17~18 | ◎ |
| " 5 | " | 炭化タングステン ボイスカ | 20 | 15~17 | ○ |
| " 6 | " | " | 50 | 15~17 | ◎ |
| " 7 | " | " | 75 | 17~18 | ◎ |
| " 8 | " | 炭素繊維 | 20 | 15~17 | ○ |
| " 9 | " | " | 50 | 15~17 | ◎ |
| " 10 | " | " | 75 | 17~18 | ◎ |
| 比較例1 | " | — | — | 20 | × |
| " 2 | 15W市販蛍光灯管(Ba, Sr, Ca)O | — | — | 13~15 | × |

(註) * 導電繊維の太さは数ミクロン〜数10ミクロン。

*** 器具磨脱1,000回後のエミッタ残量をあらわす。

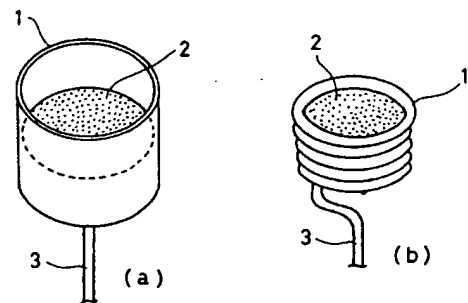
◎ : 初期エミッタ量の90%以上

○ : 初期エミッタ量の80~90%

× : 初期エミッタ量の80%以下

第 2 表

| No. | 臨極降下電圧(V) | 病 要 |
|------|-----------|-----------|
| 実施例2 | 15~17 | 放電安定 |
| " 5 | " | " |
| " 8 | " | " |
| 比較例1 | 20~25 | 放電不安定 |
| " 2 | — | 1.2万時間で断線 |



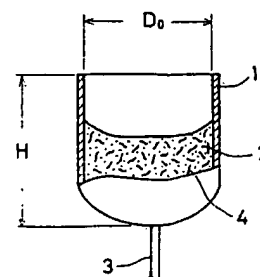
第 1 図

第1表および第2表から明らかなように、この発明にかかる発光電極は、点滅テストにおいてホットスポットの位置が変動しても臨極降下電圧の変動は殆どない。

4. 図面の簡単な説明

第1図(a)、(b)は従来の発光電極例の外観図。第2図はこの発明にかかる発光電極の一例をあらわす一部断面側面図である。

- 1... 頂部ホット 1'... コイル
2... エミッタ物質 3... リード線
4... 導電繊維



第 2 図

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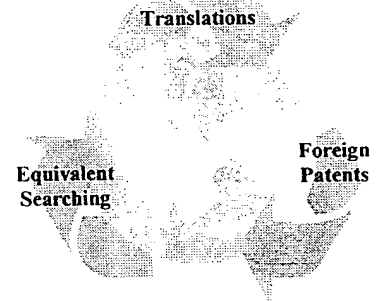
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1. ☒ Patent
- *Document No. 57-96453
- *Country Code JP
- *Publication Date 6-15-1982
- *Language JAPANESE
- No. of Pages _____ (filled by STIC)
2. ☐ Article
- *Author _____
- *Language _____
- *Country _____
3. ☐ Other
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PTO: 2003-4901

Japanese Published Unexamined Patent Application (A) No. 57-096453, published June 15, 1982; Application Filing No. 55-172169, filed December 6, 1980; Inventor(s): Hiroshi Sugiyama; Assignee: Matsushita Electric Corporation; Japanese Title: Sintered Electrode for Discharge Lamps

Sintered Electrode for Discharge Lamps

CLAIM(S)

- 1) A conductive sintered electrode for a discharge lamp that is manufactured by dispersing a conductive fiber stable at a high temperature in emitter substance.
- 2) A sintered electrode for a discharge lamp, as cited in Claim 1, wherein the conductive fiber is one selected out of a tungsten whisker, a tungsten carbide whisker, and a carbon fiber.
- 3) A sintered electrode for a discharge lamp, as cited in Claim 1 or Claim 2, wherein the emitter substance is at least one of the oxide and peroxide of alkali rare earth metal.
- 4) A sintered electrode for a discharge lamp, as cited in Claim 1 – Claim 3, wherein the mixing ratio of the conductive fiber relative to the emitter substance is 20 – 50 weight%.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

(0001)

(Field of Industrial Application)

The present invention pertains to a sintered electrode for a discharge lamp, such as a fluorescent lamp.

As an electrode for a discharge lamp, as shown in Fig. 1(a), (b), there is a well-known one, which is prepared by filling emitter substance 2 in metal pot 1 having lead 3 or by filling emitter substance 2 in coil 1' followed by sintering. The sintered electrode of this type has an advantage of a long useful life for its having much emitter substance than an electrode in which the emitter substance is coated on the surface of a tungsten filament, like that used in general households. On the other hand, it has a drawback of poor electron discharge efficiency for the emitter layer being so thick.

In addition, since a hot spot tends to be generated in the section having low potential, it is generated in the surface near the metal pot 1, which works as a good conductor in the beginning. But, supply of thermionic from this section is reduced with time. As a result, the hot spot gradually moves to the central section. In such a case, electric resistance is increased by the distance from the metal pot 1, negatively impacting on the

electron discharge. For example, with the emitter substance for a fluorescent lamp, such as barium oxide, strontium oxide, or potassium oxide, electrical conduction is excellent while the thermionic is emitted by being heated at a temperature higher than $900 - 1,000^{\circ}$, but at a temperature lower than this level, the resistance increases and a current flowing in the emitter is reduced, reducing the Joule heat generation. Therefore, the temperature of the hot spot increasingly becomes lower, dropping the thermionic emission efficiency. To improve these problems, a highly conductive metal particles are dispersed in the emitter substance and sintered in some cases. But the electric resistance is not reduced enough, so a satisfactory effect cannot be accomplished.

The present invention was produced taking the aforementioned problems into consideration, and attempts to present a sintered electrode which has a long useful life and whose thermionic emission does not drop.

The sintered electrode for a discharge lamp of the present invention has conductivity and is manufactured by dispersing in the emitter substance a conductive fiber stable at a high temperature.

As to the emitter substance used for this sintered electrode, oxide or peroxide of alkali rare earth metals, such as barium, strontium, and calcium, is generally known.

As to the conductive fiber, for example, tungsten, whisker, tungsten carbide whisker, or carbon fiber is used by itself or in combination. In this case, it is preferred to use the conductive fiber, which has low steam pressure and does not easily react to the sealed substance, such as a mercury. A proper thickness of the fiber is some microns – some tens [any number between 10 – 90] microns, which is very thin.

This conductive fiber is cut into a proper length (preferably some millimeters – some tens millimeters) and mixed in the emitter substance, and sintered. In this case, the conductive fiber needs to be dispersed evenly in the emitter substance. The mixing ratio of the conductive fiber relative to the emitter substance needs not be specified, but preferably 10 weight% or higher, more preferably, 20 – 50 weight% taking into account the negative electrode drop voltage and defective emitter substance.

As explained above, the sintered electrode for a discharge lamp is characterized in that it has conductivity and is made by dispersing conductive fiber stable at a high temperature in the emitter substance. Therefore, an excellent conduction path is created in the emitter substance, so the thermionic emission can be preserved at a high level. In this case, even if the conductive fibers are not contacting with each other, the electric resistance drops dramatically relative to the one in which metal particles are

dispersed in the emitter substance. The conductive fiber dispersed in the emitter substance functions as the reinforcing fiber to prevent the defect of the emitter substance, contributing to a long useful life of the electrode.

(Embodiment Example and Comparative Example)

As shown in Fig. 2, the sintered electrode, in which conductive fiber 4 is dispersed in the emitter substance 2, was manufactured, and its performance was examined. The metal pot 1 used was made of iron, and had inner diameter $D_o \approx 5.0$ mm and height $H \approx 5.5$ mm, which meets the EIAJ standard TC-7. Nearly 70 mg of emitter substance (BaO_2) and conductive fiber (tungsten whisker, tungsten carbide whisker or carbon fiber) were mixed at different ratios and injected into this metal pot 1, and sintered at nearly $1,000^\circ C$, to make the electrode (embodiment example) for a fluorescent lamp (FL-15W). The comparative examples were prepared by using the same method except that the conductive fiber was not mixed, and by a market-purchased one. Table 1 shows result of examining the emitter defect status and negative electrode drop voltage of the produced products. Table 2 shows the negative electrode drop voltage after the lamp was used for 30,000 hours. The lighting test shown in Table 2 was conducted by lighting for 2.5 hours and turning off for 0.5 hours.

Table 1

| No. | Emitter substance | Conductive fiber* | Conductive fiber mixing ratio (to emitter substance) weight% | Negative electrode drop voltage (V) | Emitter defect** |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Embodiment 1 | BaO ₂ | Tungsten whisker | 10 | 17-18 | O |
| Embodiment 2 | Same as above | Same as above | 20 | 15-17 | O |
| Embodiment 3 | Same as above | Same as above | 50 | 15-17 | ⊙ |
| Embodiment 4 | Same as above | Same as above | 75 | 17-18 | ⊙ |
| Embodiment 5 | Same as above | Tungsten carbide whisker | 20 | 15 - 17 | O |
| Embodiment 6 | Same as above | Same as above | 50 | 15 - 17 | ⊙ |
| Embodiment 7 | Same as above | Same as above | 75 | 17 - 18 | ⊙ |
| Embodiment 8 | Same as above | Carbon fiber | 20 | 15 - 17 | O |
| Embodiment 9 | Same as above | Same as above | 50 | 15 - 17 | ⊙ |
| Embodiment 10 | Same as above | Same as above | 75 | 17 - 18 | ⊙ |
| Comparative example 1 | Same as above | - | - | 20 | X |
| Comparative example 2 | Market purchased 15 W fluorescent lamp (Ba, Sr, Ca)O | | - | 13 - 15 | X |

Note: * indicates that the thickness of the conductive fiber is some microns – some tens microns.

** indicates the remaining amount of emitter after the equipment was removed 1,000 times.

⊙: 90% or more of the initial emitter amount.

O: 80 – 90% or more of the initial emitter amount.

X: 80% or less of the initial emitter amount.

Table 2

| No. | Negative drop voltage (V) | State |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Embodiment example 2 | 15 - 17 | Stable discharge |
| Embodiment example 5 | 15 - 17 | Stable discharge |
| Embodiment example 8 | 15 - 17 | Stable discharge |
| Comparative example 1 | 20 - 25 | Unstable discharge |
| Comparative example 2 | 20 - 25 | Short circuit after 120,000 hours |

As is evident from Table 1 and Table 2, with the sintered electrode of the present invention, the negative drop voltage change did not occur when the position of the hot spot changed in the lighting test.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 (a), (b) show an appearance of the prior art sintered electrode.

Fig. 2 shows a cut-away view of one example of the sintered electrode of the present invention.

- 1. metal pot
- 1'. Coil
- 2. emitter substance
- 3. lead
- 4. conductive fiber

Translations
U. S. Patent and Trademark Office
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Akiko Smith